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Retail Prejudice: Does Marketplace Color Really Matter?
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Abstract

In the last decade, manufacturers, retailers and service providers alike have started paying significant attention to ethnic minority consumer segments. Several companies have increased their marketing budgets in the millions with the intention of attracting these consumers to their products, services and stores. Yet many retailers in particular are ill-equipped to deal with these new minority segments, and conventional wisdom suggests that simply attracting minority segments to stores may not be enough to ensure their return. This study seeks to examine two issues that are important to retailers who are focused on minority consumer segments: perceived retail prejudice and customer perceived value. Customer perceived value is explored looking at three forms of value; hedonic, utilitarian/functional and social. As retailers learn more about these new market segments how they perceive value will be a significant component in predicting future loyalty. Customers in three minority segments namely African Americans Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans are surveyed for their opinions on how they determine value, and their perceptions of perceived prejudice within retail environments. The findings indicate that all three minority groups perceive significant prejudice within most retail environments and there are differences amongst the minority segments in terms of how they perceive value, and which types of value are most important to them in a retail purchase.

Keywords

ethnicity, ethnic marketing, ethnic consumers, perceived prejudice, retail racism, retail prejudice, customer perceived value, hedonic value, utilitarian value, functional value, social value.